

Pioneers of Alienation: The Transformations

Not bad, he always said. Adding portentously, surviving. They were all psychiatric survivors, disabled.

Her worker returned, and she resumed suffering. It was as if Johnny didn't exist, which was the case and suited him fine. He didn't want to discuss the Crazy House, their principal reason for being there. She probably didn't want to discuss it either. He could almost hear her. She'd say, I don't want to think about the past. Let bygones be bygones, I always say.

He wondered if she'd had coffees this morning. She had 3 or 4 before breakfast. With plenty of sugar. She was probably suffering from concurrent withdrawal. He figured she'd cheated. He had. He was a typical cynic. He couldn't believe that anyone could be less dishonest than himself.

The worker returned. Her number was up. He heard her whimper when the Philippino nurse stuck the needle in her arm. Ouchy, ouchy! He wished he could have done it.

She whimpered as they gathered up her things, chiefly her ubiquitous foolscap. I'm a good woman, she pleaded. She must have thought they were going to stab her again. I don't hurt anybody. I read. I do knitting. I have my writing, she said, as the worker slowly escorted her off the premises.

Then Johnny's number was up....

Romeo would point through the windshield at a pedestrian waddling ahead of them, across the road.

We're so afraid of death, but it doesn't exist, we'll never know it, we're all like that woman up ahead, the center of her universe, wanting to get across before the light changes.

Then he'd step on it....

C.K. Clarke opposed further integration with the General Hospital, in favour of a separate institution.

He exploited the figure of the person in the street, rendered all the more pathetic as an old woman, "a poor old person whose brain happened to be affected by its arteries, or something like that" (27).

She who would presumably have been better off at his clinic with its "research laboratories and all the other laboratory essentials in the modern treatment of this class of patient" (30).

It is interesting that Clarke chose, as the typical beneficiary of his facility, someone - a chronic patient, a case of senile dementia -- who would not have gone there, but to Thing Street Asylum.

When he was on welfare he walked everywhere.... He got a really good idea of some of the folks that weren't on it.... Hipsters....

And some of the things who were.... Himself.... Bums.... Shabby.... Sleeping in the